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COLLECTIONS
OF THE
New Hampshire Antiquarian Society.
No. 1.

WHO INVENTED THE AMERICAN STEAMBOAT?

A STATEMENT OF THE EVIDENCE THAT THE FIRST AMERICAN STEAMBOAT, PROPELLED BY MEANS OF PADDLE WHEELS, WAS INVENTED, CONSTRUCTED, AND SUCCESSFULLY OPERATED ON CONNECTICUT RIVER, ABOUT 1792, BY CAPTAIN SAMUEL MOREY, OF ORFORD, N. H., AND THAT ROBERT FULTON SAW THE BOAT IN OPERATION.

BY WM. A. MOWRY, A. M.
OF PROVIDENCE, R. I.

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READ BEFORE THE NEW HAMPSHIRE ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY AT AN ADJOURNED MEETING, OCTOBER 22, 1874.

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WHO INVENTED THE AMERICAN STEAMBOAT?

Dr. Renwick commences his biography of Robert Fulton with this sentence:—

"The gratitude of mankind has not failed to record with honor the names of those who have been inventors of useful improvements in the arts." It would, perhaps, be nearer the truth to say, "those who have *obtained the reputation* of being the inventors of useful improvements in the arts." But it is to be feared that, in too many cases, the real inventor is not known.

It has been said that language was invented to conceal one's thoughts. Many times it would seem to be true that "history was invented to conceal facts." However this may be, it may confidently be affirmed, that frequently the truth of history is so covered up and buried beneath the debris of passing events, that it requires a long time to dig it out and bring it to the light, so that it may be seen in its true character, and its proper relations to other events be fully appreciated.

It is especially the province of an Historical Society — such as I have the honor of addressing — to rescue from oblivion facts of importance, and record them for the benefit of the future historian. As a general truth it may be said, that one or two generations must pass by, before an impartial history can be written.

The first steamboat upon American waters is generally understood to have been made by Fulton, and its first voyage was in 1807, from New York to Albany.

It is not my purpose to discuss the relative merits of European inventors in this paper, but to endeavor to answer the questions: "Who invented the first American Steamboat? and When and where was its first trip made?"

THE claim has sometimes been set up that to John Fitch belongs the honor of this invention. It is certain that Fitch was a superior mechanic, and that he made many experiments in the application of steam as a propelling power for boats. His plan was to put in motion by means of steam a series of paddles, which should operate like the human arm. But this — 1783 — was before Watt had invented his double engine, and the single engine was "too feeble and cumbrous to yield an adequate force." —*Life of Fulton, p. 41.* This method of paddles was a failure, and has not been followed up by any improvements in that direction.

IN 1787 James Rumsey made experiments in propelling boats by pumping in water, to be afterwards forced out at the stern, the resistance of the water pushing the boat along. For this invention Rumsey applied for a patent, but his application was rejected, and experiments failed to bring success, either for himself, or others following in the same line of thought.

JOHN STEVENS experimented on the application of steam to boats between 1790 and 1800. He invented a boat which was tried on the Hudson, but without success.

WE must conclude, therefore, that unless some new competitor appears, Fulton will bear off the prize. Unless it can be shown that a boat was constructed, launched upon American waters, and pro-

pelled successfully by steam power, prior to 1807, then Fulton's Boat, the CLERMONT, plying between New York and Albany, was the pioneer boat. But if it can be shown that a steamboat had been constructed, and successfully propelled by steam power, prior to the above date, then the laurels do not belong to Fulton.

IT will be my purpose to show, in this paper, that such was the case; that such a boat was invented, made and put to a successful test, fourteen or fifteen years before the date of Fulton's boat, and there is strong evidence that Fulton saw the models of this boat, that he made a visit to the place where the boat was built, saw the boat itself, and it has been ever claimed that, by this boat, and by the experiments of its inventor and builder, his attention was directed to the subject of steam navigation, and that the invention which he claimed as his own, fairly belonged to another.

IF I am not mistaken, the credit of inventing, building and successfully working the first Steamboat in America, is due to a self educated New Englander, a native of Connecticut, whose ancestors were from the old Bay State, but whose family, while he was yet a child, emigrated to northern New Hampshire, where he built the first steamboat in our country, if not in the world, propelled by paddle wheels, moved by a steam engine; and put it to a successful test upon the waters of the upper Connecticut river, as early as 1792, or 1793.

IT is only justice to Mr. Fulton to say, that he was the first man — that is, in connection with Chancellor Livingston and by the aid of Livingston's mon-

ey — to make a *practical business success* of a steamboat. He did build a boat, which was successfully propelled by steam by means of paddle wheels, and he is, perhaps, properly called the father of American steamboat navigation.

But the question returns, was he the originator of the plan? Was he the inventor? Did he make the first paddle wheel steamboat that worked successfully? To these questions we must answer, "No." The invention and the first boat were by another man. The story of this invention I am to tell.

BETWEEN the years 1760 and 1770 occurred a very important emigration from the vicinity of Lebanon, Connecticut, to Orford and Hanover, New Hampshire. Rev. Dr. Eleazer Wheelock, the minister of Lebanon, had established a school for the education of the Indians. As the number increased and his resources increased also, he determined to move the school nearer to the frontiers, both to diminish the expense of living and to be nearer the Indians. The school was therefore moved to Hanover in 1770, and called Dartmouth College. (*Life of Ledyard.*) It is probable that this removal of Dr. Wheelock and his school from Lebanon to Hanover was in a large measure due to the spirit of emigration which had already sprung up among his parishioners and their neighbors.

THE first settlers in the town of Orford were John Mann and his wife, who started from Hebron, October 16, 1765. They made the journey in eight days, the young bride on horseback, and her husband much of the way on foot. About three months later, these pioneers of a new settlement were followed by

another family from Hebron, consisting of Colonel Israel Morey, his wife and several children.

THIS journey of about two hundred miles was made in the dead of winter — January, 1766 — with an ox team, the wife carrying in her arms an infant six months old. What a journey was that, to be made at such a season, much of it through a pathless forest, an unbroken wilderness. From Charlestown to Orford, sixty miles, it is said there was no road, only a foot path with marked trees for guide boards.

AMONG the children of this hardy and courageous pioneer was a boy of four years named SAMUEL. The family settled in Orford, and during the Revolutionary war the father was made General, and commanded a body of brave men upon the frontier. As the boy SAMUEL grew up to manhood he turned his attention to some subjects connected with mechanics and chemistry, and from about 1780 to about 1820 or 1830, he devoted much of his time to practical experiments upon steam, heat and light. One writer says of him:

"SAMUEL MOREY was not a mere visionary experimenter or superficial sciolist in hydrostatics and pneumatology. His correspondence with the late Professor Silliman of Yale College shows that he was an ingenious inventor and practical philosopher." — *Orford Celebration, Mann's Address. p. 27.*

IN the first three volumes of *Silliman's Journal of Science and Art*, may be found several articles from his pen, upon light, heat and steam. An article in the first volume of the same Journal, by John L. Sullivan, Esquire, of Boston, describes and *commends* Morey's apparatus for producing heat and light from tar

or rosin and the steam of water. In the same volume is an article entitled "The Revolving Steam Engine recently invented by Samuel Morey, and patented by him on the 14th of July, 1815, with four Engravings." I come now to the account of his invention of the steamboat.

I SHALL first relate the facts of the case as I understand them, and then endeavor to bring such proof as shall substantiate them beyond reasonable dispute. It has already been mentioned that Captain Morey had, for a long time, devoted himself largely to experiments upon light, heat and steam. Watt had invented the steam engine. Captain Morey was fully persuaded that the power of steam could be applied to propelling boats by means of paddle wheels. He therefore set himself to the task of inventing a boat, to be thus propelled by steam. He made the boat, built the steam engine, put in the necessary machinery, and with a single companion, if not entirely alone, made his first trip with complete success, running several miles from Orford, New Hampshire, up the Connecticut river to Fairlee, Vermont, and returning to Orford. This was as early as 1793, probably in 1792; although one writer says about 1790; at least fourteen years before Fulton's trial trip in the Clermont up the Hudson, and nine years before his first trial boat constructed in France.—*Life of Fulton.*

IT is doubtful whether Fulton had turned his thoughts to the subject of the steamboat before this time. This very year, 1793, is the first mention of this subject in connection with Fulton that I have seen. Dr. Renwick mentions that he laid a scheme relating to steam navigation before Earl Stanhope,

in a letter dated September 30, 1793. Another writer says, "Robert Fulton had thought of steam as a motive power for vessels as early as 1793." But it is very certain from all accounts that he devoted his energies to other subjects and other plans until 1793 and later. About this time (perhaps 1794) while in England, he invented a mill for sawing marble and excavators for digging canals; a method of spinning flax and making ropes. For several years about this time, it would appear that his greatest efforts related to inland navigation, or improvements in canals.

THERE is what appears to be conclusive evidence that Captain Morey, encouraged by Professor Silliman, of New Haven, went to New York with the model of his boat and had frequent interviews with Fulton and Livingston, before they had invented and put in operation the Clermont. He was cordially received by them, and treated with great respect and attention. They suggested to him some improvements in the construction of his boat, and it is even stated that they offered him for his invention $100.000, if he would return home and make the alterations suggested so as to operate favorably. These alterations he made with entire success, and again repaired to New York; but his Metropolitan friends treated him with such coldness and indifference, as clearly to indicate that they had fully acquired the secret of his invention and desired no further intercourse with him.

IF the statements that are made upon what appears to be competent authority are true, his treatment by Fulton and Livingston is anything but creditable to them.

THE proof is positive and from a variety of sources that he made frequent trips up the Connecticut in his little boat; but as he was so far from leading scientific men, and the best mechanical skill, the result was that Fulton, aided by the wealth of others and the influence of friends, finally succeeded in building a large boat, upon the very principle of Morey's — namely, paddle wheels — which has given him the credit of bringing into successful operation this important invention, while if our conclusions are correct, the real inventor, being a man in obscure life, and living far back from the great Metropolis, has passed into such obscurity as to be wholly unknown to fame.

IT now remains for me to bring forward the requisite proofs for the foregoing. I have in my possession several letters written by Mr. George A. Morey, of Fairlee, Vermont, a gentleman of the highest respectability, a nephew of Captain Morey, a man now eighty-two years old, but of vigorous intellect, and who well remembers the story, as frequently told by Captain Morey and others who saw the boat when first built. From these letters the following extracts are made:

"IT is and always has been claimed here, that he was the inventor of the steamboat instead of Fulton. Be that as it may, Fulton saw two of his models before he took a patent; and he (Morey) took two or three patents for the application of steam, before Fulton took any. And then Fulton took one for the application of steam to boats, and that, after he had seen both models of Morey's.

"SEVERAL years since I requested Mr. John Willard, of New York, who married a granddaughter of Captain Morey, to ascertain from the Patent

Records at Washington, how early Captain Morey took out a patent on steam. I was requested to do this by the Secretary of the Vermont Historical Society, some of the members of which thought they knew that Captain Morey was the real inventor, and that Fulton stole it. The result was, the Record showed that Captain Morey took out two or three patents before Fulton took any. Morey's were for the application of steam; Fulton's for the application of steam to boats. I sent the copy I received to the Secretary of the society. The Records have since been burned, and I have written to see if the original copy can be found, so that the person who took it can certify to it. I have the assurance that thorough search shall be made, and all done that can be to save and forward the evidence. Recent attention to the subject has resulted in the general conviction in this vicinity, that Fulton stole the invention, and I have no doubt it will be proved that Captain Morey put the first boat on the water, propelled by steam, that ever was put on the water on this continent."

I WILL next introduce a letter to the *Boston Journal*, from the Hon. Clark Jillson, ex-Mayor of Worcester, who has given much study to the subject of steamboats and their inventors, and who affirms distinctly and unequivocally that Captain Morey was the first man to apply steam power to navigation.

"THE FIRST STEAMBOAT.

Worcester, Mass., Feb. 22, 1874.

To the Editors of the Boston Journal:

MY attention has been called to a letter published in your paper some days since, in relation to a statement made in my address to the Sons and Daughters of Vermont, at Worcester, February 10, 1874, wherein I affirmed that Captain Samuel Morey, of

Fairlee, Vermont, was the first man to apply steam power to navigation.

"THE writer of this letter claims that James Rumsey and John Fitch were the original inventors of steam navigation; but well authenticated history does not sustain this proposition.

"IT is well known that John Fitch prepared a memoir of himself, including a history of his experiments in relation to steam, and that these papers were bequeathed to the Franklin Library, in Philadelphia, with directions that they should be unsealed and perused thirty years after his decease. At the appointed time they were opened, and found to contain a detailed account of his life, together with the progress of his experiments in the application of steam to navigation.

"BY these papers — written by himself, and concealed for a generation from public view, giving contemporaries no opportunity to dispute any of the statements therein set forth — the history of John Fitch has been made up and presented to the world. It is clear by his own showing that his experiments did not amount to a success, and he stands before the world today simply as a claimant.

"IT is said that James Rumsey pretended that he was the inventor of steam navigation, and applied for a patent, but it was decided he was not the inventor, and his application was rejected. This disposes of Mr. Rumsey.

"THERE is no reliable historical evidence to show that Fitch was the inventor of steam navigation in this country, from the fact that the progress in that art can not be traced back to him; but it can be traced to Robert Fulton, and from him directly to Captain Samuel Morey, and nowhere else. It is settled beyond all question that Morey had launched his boat on the waters of Vermont before Fulton had accomplished the same thing in New York. It is also a

well established fact that Fulton visited Morey at Fairlee for the purpose of witnessing his successful experiment, before he (Fulton) had launched any kind of steam craft upon the waters; and it can be shown that Morey had been engaged in such experiments for years before; so that the first practical steamboat ever seen upon the waters of America was invented by Captain Samuel Morey, the father of steam navigation as we see it today. History shows conclusively that his rude boat was improved upon and developed directly into what we now admire as the modern steamboat, while the experiments of Rumsey and Fitch not only rest in oblivion, but they never added a single thought or suggestion to the genius of Fulton.

"THERE is no doubt that Fitch was an inventor and a man of consummate ability. The fact of his conceiving the idea of writing a history of his own life, claiming therein to be the original inventor of one of the grandest arts the world has ever known, and sealing up these statements for thirty years, till every contemporary was dead, thereby making his assertions the best evidence in existence of their own accuracy, was the scheme of no common man.

"BUT this trick bears an unfavorable comparison with the quiet acts of the honest Vermonter who has never uttered a word in his own behalf; but with characteristic generosity and nobleness of heart unfolded his entire plan of steam navigation, wherein had culminated the labors of his life to the shrewd denizen of Gotham; to be by him appropriated and handed down through the generations as his own invention. (Signed) CLARK JILLSON."

MR. JILLSON is a Vermonter, and his statement that the invention of Captain Morey was made in Vermont has called out further evidence from a native of Orford, New Hampshire.

J. B. RICHARDSON, Esquire, of Boston, an eminent lawyer, who was familiar with the facts of the case, and with the evidence for the same, contributed an article to the *Boston Journal* a few days later, which I quote entire below. Mr. Richardson told me that he had many times heard Mr. John Mann, Junior, tell the story of this steamboat, substantially as narrated above, and Mr. Richardson believed that he —Mr. John Mann, Junior,— accompanied Captain Morey in his first trip up the river in this boat.

"WHO MADE THE FIRST STEAMBOAT?

To the Editors of the Boston Journal:

"THIS question is not unlikely to become as interesting to the curious in such matters, and perhaps not less difficult of satisfactory solution, than that to whom belongs the credit of the discovery or application of ether; or, who wrote the famous Letters of Junius? But your correspondent, Mr. Jillson of Worcester, in his commendably ardent devotion to the honor and fame of his native state, in his letter published in *The Journal*, on the 24th instant, is in error in one or two matters of *circumstance*, regarding Captain Samuel Morey, whom he believes to have been the 'first inventor and father of steam navigation.' Captain Morey spent the last seven years of his life in Fairlee, Vermont, and died there, and he has of course been spoken of as 'late of Fairlee', etc. Hence the error of Mr. Jillson, probably. It is certain, however, that the scene of Captain Morey's first steam navigation, and of his experiments in it, was on the Connecticut river in New Hampshire, and that Morey at that time resided in Orford, New Hampshire. The most reliable account of Morey's experiments and claim to having made the first application of steam to navigation, and the 'first practical steamboat,' was made and published nearly twenty years ago by the Rev. Cyrus Mann.

REV. MR. MANN was a son of the original settler and founder of Orford. He died in 1859, at the age of seventy-three years. His eldest brother, Major John Mann, Junior, was the first, white, male child born in that town, and for many years previous to his death was the nearest neighbor of the writer, who has often heard him relate the story of Captain Morey's first experience in 'steamboat navigation.' Mr. Mann was an educated man, and of the strictest integrity; and is reputed to have spent considerable time and research in the investigation of the respective claims of Fulton, Morey and others to the credit and honor of a practical success in steam navigation. The following is an extract from his account of it above mentioned:—

"'THE credit of the original invention of the steamboat is commonly awarded to Robert Fulton, but it is believed it belongs primarily and chiefly to a far more obscure individual. So far as is known, the first steamboat ever seen on the waters of America was invented by Captain Samuel Morey, of Orford, New Hampshire. The astonishing sight of this man ascending Connecticut river, between that place and Fairlee, in a little boat just large enough to contain himself, and the rude machinery connected with the steam boiler, and a handful of wood for a fire, was witnessed by the writer in his boyhood, and by others who yet survive. This was as early as 1793, or earlier, and before Fulton's name had ever been mentioned in connection with steam navigation.'

"MR. MANN, further on in this article, refers to visits made by Fulton to Morey at Orford, during the period of his experiments, and that Fulton and many others who were investigating the same subject did visit Captain Morey at that time, can be shown beyond question. Robert Fulton may have been the first man to bridge over the gulf between

experimental ventures and positive, useful achievement in steam navigation, but he can by no means be regarded as the originator of the idea, or the inventor of the mechanism. Fulton accomplished no more than many others till 1807, long before which successfull experiments, like that of Captain Morey, had been made in very many places.

"BUT I intended only to correct Mr. Jillson's error, and perhaps that of others, as to the *venue* of Captain Morey's experiments, and his residence at that time.

(Signed) J. B. R.

"20 Court Street, February 27, 1874."

A FEW days subsequent to the date of the above letter, another appeared in the same paper, from St. Johnsbury, Vermont. It is supposed to have been written by a prominent gentleman of that place, a cashier in one of the banks. He says: —

"I AM inclined to believe that the state of New Hampshire, and the town of Orford, are entitled to the honor and claim of the man who first applied steam to navigation on American waters. I remember when a boy, of hearing the old settlers of Orford tell about Captain Samuel Morey's steamboat, and how it run on Connecticut river. Captain Morey was a man of remarkable inventive genius, and among other strange things, he told the good people of the town that some day he should take a ride on the river in a steamboat! They of course were faithless, and only laughed at his project. But he persevered and constructed the first steamboat, probably, that ever rode upon river or sea. It was a rude affair for a steamboat, but it proved successful.

"CAPTAIN MOREY made his first, experimental, or trial trip on Sunday, during the hours of religious service, when the people were at church. He chose this time so that nobody should see him, in case of failure. The people went to meeting in those days. On a quiet Sunday, not far either way from 1790, this

notable man, with his rude craft, steamed up the river between Fairlee and Orford, entirely alone, [this is probably a mistake] and on the following day announced to the astonished people his wonderful triumph. Honor to whom honor is due. Soon after this Fulton consulted with Morey, and so did others, and ere long a steamboat was launched on the Hudson, and steam navigation, one of the modern wonders, became a practical fact."

THE article by Rev. Cyrus Mann, quoted above by Mr. Richardson, (p. 15), was published in the *Boston Recorder*, in 1858. In this article he says:—

"MOREY had his mind set upon the steamboat and had actually brought it into operation, although in a rude and imperfect state at that period. He had corresponded with Professor Silliman, of New Haven, and been encouraged by that distinguished patron of the arts and sciences. Many of the writings of this correspondence are still extant. Soon after a few successful trips in his boat on the river, Morey went with the model of it to New York, where he had frequent interviews with Messrs. Fulton and Livingston, to whom he exhibited and explained his invention. They advised to have the engine in the side or center of the boat, instead of the bow or fore part to which it had been assigned by Morey. That they were highly pleased with what he had exhibited is manifest from the offer made of $100.000, if he would return home and make the alteration suggested, so as to operate favorably. They treated him with great respect and attention. Taking a friendly leave he returned to his distant residence to make the alteration.

"Having completed the work at considerable expense of time and study, and with the help of his brother Major Israel Morey, who aided in making the machinery, he repaired to New York, expecting the same cordiality which he had before experi-

enced. But to his surprise, he was treated with great coldness and neglect, and no further intercourse with him was desired. The secret of his invention had been fully acquired, and from subsequent developments it appeared that Fulton, in the interval of Morey's absence, had planned and formed a boat according to the model shown him, and he now desired no further communication with the originator. He even went to Orford during the period in which the alteration was being made, to examine its progress and the prospect of success.

"In 1798, several years after Morey's boat had ascended the Connecticut river, the legislature of New York 'passed an act investing Mr. Livingston with the exclusive right and privilege of navigating all kinds of boats which might be propelled by the force of fire or steam, on all the waters within the territory or jurisdiction of the state of New York.'

"Subsequently, Mr. Livingston entered into a contract with Fulton, by which, among other things, it was agreed that a patent should be taken in the United States in Fulton's name. In 1802 or 1803, Fulton came forward with an experimental boat for which he obtained a patent with the usual exclusive privileges. Thus it appears that there was ample time after his interviews with Morey for him to complete his schemes previous to their consummation. He now claimed to be the inventor of the steamboat. The patent could not be obtained without Fulton's taking an oath that the improvement was wholly his.

"Does not this look like great unfairness towards Mr. Morey? Does it not almost irresistibly convey the idea that the patentee surreptitiously seized upon the invention and turned it to his own account; taking advantage of the quiet disposition and retired position of the real inventor? In this light Morey ever after, to the day of his death, viewed the whole transaction. Living witnesses testify that he repeatedly 'complained of Fulton for superseding him in

obtaining a patent, and securing the honor and emolument of the invention.' A gentleman of unimpeachable veracity, who was with Morey some of the last years and days of his life, asserts that he most bitterly criminated Fulton for his ill treatment in secretly depriving him of his sacred rights and privileges.

"WHY should the dying man have done this and persisted in it amidst the solemnities of his situation, and the approaching realities of eternity, unless he knew that the truth was on his side? He was a man of veracity, in whom his friends and acquaintances had entire confidence."

THESE statements are further corroborated by Rev. Joel Mann, a brother of the writer of the above, in his Centennial Oration at Orford, delivered September 7, 1865. He says: —

"IF I am not mistaken, Fulton obtained his first idea of such a vessel from Morey, and secured a patent just as Morey had secured or was preparing to secure one for himself. Certain it is that the first boat moved by steam was a little thing constructed by him, and its trial trip was on this river, opposite this village. The trial was made on a sabbath, when the people were at meeting, to avoid notice; when he, with a brother of mine, passed up in it near where the bridge now is; for it was important to ascertain whether it would go against the current as well as with it.

"MY brother Cyrus, a few years ago, collected and published the proofs of the fact, that Morey was the real inventor of the steamboat, so far, at least, as steam could be applied to the propelling of such a craft. Had our ingenious townsman lived in Boston or New York, where his facilities for constructing and making improvements would have been such as he needed, he would now probably be acknowledged as the projector of those floating palaces which are crossing oceans and visiting the remotest portions of the world."

I HAVE been thus full in making these quotations, from so many sources, in order to substantiate beyond any dispute the position which I had taken, that Captain Samuel Morey was the real inventor of the steamboat.

IT may not be out of place to add an anecdote or two, illustrative of the character and peculiar traits of this wonderful man. These I have received from his nephew, the only remaining grandson of General Israel Morey, a man now nearly eighty two years of age.

"ONE year, after a very cold summer, corn sold as high as $3. a bushel, and hay from $30. to $40. a ton, and famine stared the poor in the face. Captain Morey being an extensive farmer had large quantities of both articles. Corn he sold to the poor *only*, for a dollar a bushel, or a day's work in haying, and but one bushel at a time; and so close was he driven, and so large the number to feed, that near harvest time one-half bushel was all that one man could have at a time: yet one dollar was all he would take, while others sold for two dollars and fifty cents or three dollars per bushel; and though he was set upon by speculators, not a bushel could they get. One case I will notice: —

"A SPECULATOR called on him and enquired if he had corn to sell. He said he had. He asked the price. He replied, 'one dollar per bushel.' 'How much have you?' inquired the speculator. 'A few hundred bushels,' replied the Captain. The buyer said he would take what he had. He was told by the Captain, 'You cannot have one kernel. It is not for such c——d scoundrels as you—speculating out of the poor, but for honest, laboring men, that work for a living; and if you are not away soon, I will set the dogs on you.' The speculator departed speedily.

To have realized the scene, you should have seen Captain Morey. He was a size larger than Daniel Webster. His frown would frighten any man, but his smile was peace. I never saw any man whose face showed more distinctly his inward feelings. But to return:—A very poor man, whose family had been kept a long time by his generosity, obtained fifty cents, went to the Captain and wanted a half bushel of corn. He was told he might keep his money. 'But,' said he, 'you go to my head man and get your half bushel of corn.' He then wanted to leave his fifty cents, and take a bushel; but was told that 'one half bushel was all any man could have for love or money; and, as harvest was near, they must pick the early ears and make the ends meet.' His hay he sold in the same way to farmers and poor men.

"He told the tax collector of Orford, that if any one on his tax bill could not pay the tax without distress, to come to him, and he would pay the tax for him. He was like no body else. He was as much larger in intellect as in person. He loved sports, and was ahead of all, whether in hunting, ball playing, or any of the sports of the day. He was tender hearted and humane.

"When there was to be a man hanged in Haverhill, ten miles from here, (I was a lad then), he did not wish the boys to go to see the execution. He told us, if we would stay at home and have a game of ball, he would give to all such a good supper and plenty of lemonade. He joined with us, greatly to our delight and enjoyment, and seemingly to his own.

"To us it was a great day. We found it, as he had told us, 'better than a hanging.'

"He despised drunkenness. He told, a few years before he died–1843–that he took a distaste to drinking when a boy. His father kept tavern. A good deacon came in and called for a glass of rum, which was furnished, and he began to talk about the drought, which was very severe at that time, and fears were expressed that nothing would be raised. He took a second glass, and then mixed religion with the drought, and hoped there would be a revival. He took a third, glass, and then said he hoped there would not be another drop of rain, till they had one of the greatest revivals ever known, if all the crops went into the ground, and all the people died. This settled the question with him, that *rum* and *religion* had better be kept separate."

In another letter from the same gentleman occurs the following: —

"In their early days Captain Samuel Morey and his four brothers were deadly foes to bears, wolves, catamounts and the like, and if they were more friendly to deer, it was because they evidently liked their meat better, and not because they killed less. They evidently inherited much of the English hunting blood, as they each kept hounds, if not full packs, enough to make several. Samuel kept a park of deer many years, and raised the animals and domesticated them. Although they were all excellent marksmen, Samuel excelled. I have seen him shoot deer on the full run, and hawks on the wing. He was something of a politician, and had the honor of representing the town of Orford as long as he would. Mechanism was his chief study, though in his latter days he took great delight in geology.

"He wrote an article, which was published in Silliman's Journal, describing the wells on the summit

between the Connecticut River and the Merrimack, and giving his views that the tides of the Atlantic wore the wells with rolling stones, one of which is now in the Museum at Dartmouth College. In speaking of it to me, he said, 'people then called me a fool or crazy, but now all Geologists agree that all this country was once under water.' Moulton, his brother, (so named from General Moulton of New Hampshire, an old friend of General Morey), received a liberal education, (graduated at Dartmouth College in 1789), was a lawyer, for some years a judge of the Orange County Court, and many years a leading member of the Vermont legislature. He stood high in his profession, was a man of fine parts, and sought knowledge more for the pleasure it gave then for the good it might do.

"My father (Israel junior,) was the oldest of the sons that lived, (one older died in infancy.) He was a lieutenant (though a boy merely) in the revolution, and had the command of a small force stationed on the road from Well's River to Canada in block houses to protect the settlers and travelers from the Indians."

I might quote further incidents relative to this family, but the above must suffice.

Since writing the above I have received a copy of the proceedings at the "*Reunion of the Sons of Vermont*," at Worcester, with the Address of Hon. Clark Jillson, and an appendix containing a series of letters relating to the origin of steam navigation in this country.

This pamplet of sixty pages corroborates quite fully the positions taken in this paper.

IN conclusion it will only be necessary to recapitulate, very briefly, the points aimed at:—

IT is beyond question that the present system of American steamboats can be traced directly back to the CLERMONT, Fulton's boat, built under his superintendence, with money furnished by Chancellor Livingston. It were in vain to attempt to detract from Fulton's fame, as the one first to bring into *successful operation*, the principle of applying steam power to the propulsion of steamboats by *paddle wheels*.

BUT when it is asked, '*Where did Fulton get the idea?*" there is much evidence to show that it was from Captain Samuel Morey's little boat on the Connecticut river.

WHETHER this be so or not, there can be but little doubt that, when the question is asked, "*Who invented, built and run the first, American, paddle wheel steamboat?*" the answer must be, "CAPTAIN SAMUEL MOREY."

THE old gentleman from Fairlee, above referred to, (Mr. George A. Morey), in a letter to the Hon. Mr. Jillson, says:—

"I CAN assure you that all here, who lived in Captain Morey's day, as much believe he was entitled to the honor of being the first man that put a steamboat upon American waters, as they believe they have an existence."

AND Mayor Jillson himself says:—

"THE time is not far distant when history will accord to Captain Samuel Morey the honor of being the originator of steam navigation in America."

APPENDIX.

THE BOAT SUNK IN FAIRLEE POND.

THE ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY was informed that the original boat, constructed by Capt. Morey, was sunk in Fairlee Pond, about fifty years ago, in about 25 ft. of water, not far from shore. That it had been seen from the surface, under favoring circumstances, by persons now living, and that its proximate locality was known.

THE SOCIETY, at an adjourned meeting, on the 24th of October, 1874, appointed CAPT. G. A. CURTICE, of Contoocook, and EDWARD W. HOWE, ESQ., of Boston, a Committee to proceed to Orford and Fairlee, enquire into the facts of the case, and report as to the practicability of raising the boat and preserving the Engine, in case it could be found. The following is their

REPORT.

Contoocook, N. H., Nov. 2, 1874.

The undersigned, having been duly appointed and commissioned to investigate the facts concerning a Steamboat, said to have been built by Capt. Samuel Morey, and to have been sunk in Fairlee (Vt.) Pond, proceeded to that vicinity, Oct. 27, 1874. Our first call was to see Dea. Isaac Willard, of Orford, N. H., who has been active in behalf of the fame of Capt. Morey. He was absent, but his brother, David E. Willard, showed us every courtesy, taking his team and carrying us at once to the house of Daniel Morey, of Fairlee, a grand-nephew of Capt. Samuel Morey. Morey is a man about thirty-five years of age, a section hand on the railroad. He kindly gave us the use of his boat, on this and the following day, in which to explore the pond.

Daniel Morey fully believes the boat to be in this pond, but has never seen it. His brother, who has resided in California for the past fifteen years, has told Daniel that he had seen the boat on the bottom of the pond, *under very favorable circum-*

stances of clearness and quietness of water, and brightness of sunshine. We spent the afternoon in sounding the pond, and, early Wednesday morning, having, by the kindness of Mr. Willard, been put in communication with a Mr. Williams, a fisherman, over sixty years of age, who consented to accompany us, we proceeded again to the pond, with ropes and a grappling iron. We had been told that this Mr. Williams had *certainly seen* the boat at the bottom of the pond, but Mr. Williams said *he had never seen* it, though he had often been told by Capt. Bond, of Haverhill, N. H., when fishing with him through the ice, *just where* the boat was lying. Capt. Bond has been dead several years. Williams did not know certainly of a living person who had ever *seen* the boat, [since it was sunk], though he was quite decided as to its position in the water, and of the appearance of the boat, which he had often seen, when a boy, though he had never seen it moved by steam power.

His description was, substantially, as follows: A large boat, full twenty feet in length, painted white, with red streaks, and black gunwale, called the "AUNT SALLY." It was used as a pleasure boat, and was fitted with paddle wheels *on the sides*, which a man turned by means of a crank; and, afterwards, when propelled by steam, the wheel was in the stern.

The boat was sunk, by the enemies of Capt. Morey, by filling it with stones. He thought the machinery was in the boat *when sunk.* According to his arithmetic, we concluded that the boat was sunk between 1820 and 1825. With his assistance, we dragged over a considerable tract in the immediate vicinity of the reputed position of the famous "AUNT SALLY," but the pickerel grass was so thick and long—from one to six feet—that the grapple, whose prongs were about one foot in length, had to be cleared every ten or twelve feet, and but little satisfactory progress could be made. Once, only, was any thing more solid than grass touched by the grapple.

The boat is said to lie in about eighteen feet of water, on a bottom so soft that a pole can easily be forced down four or five feet, in the midst of this dense pickerel grass; and no one claims that it has been seen for at least twenty years. If Williams' memory is to be trusted, it cannot be the original dug-out which made the triumphant trip on the Connecticut river in 1792 or '93, but a much heavier boat, which, if filled with stones, would, in all probability, be out of sight long ere the present time.

Most of the villagers at Orford, whom we met, expressed a firm belief in the boat at the bottom of Fairlee Pond, and hoped it could be raised; but a Dr. Willard Hosford, an intelligent physician of sixty years or more, did "not take any stock in this boat story." The Doctor has been a resident of Orford

many years, and was well acquainted with Capt. Samuel Morey.* Although our mission was not very successful, as regards the *boat*, we are happy in obtaining possession, for a time at least, of what was called, in Orford and Fairlee,

"THE MODEL ENGINE AND BOILER."†

They are the property of Mr. Daniel Morey, before mentioned; the engine is still in good working order, though the copper boiler, of ingenious structure, has suffered explosion.

Capt. Samuel Morey's "Model"—probably the first or among the first of his successful steam motors—is a *rotary engine*, balanced on a *disk* 1⅛ inches in diameter, the disk attached to a tube connecting *with the boiler*. In this disk are two openings, ½ by ⅛ inch; one connected with the boiler, as mentioned above, the other opening into the air. This forms the valve seat. The valves consist of a second disk, with corresponding openings, fitting exactly upon the surface of the first disk, and from the two openings in this upper disk, are tubes leading to the extremities of the cylinder. The piston rod is attached to a stationary crank in the centre of the machine, and the outward and inward movements of the piston cause the revolution of the *upper disk*, cylinder, &c., *upon* the lower *disk*; thus bringing the *valves* or *openings in the upper disk*, alternately over the *steam tube* and the *escape opening* of the lower disk.

The entire length of the machine is 6½ inches. The cylinder, which is of brass, is 1 15-16 inches in length, and 1½ inches in diameter. Length of stroke, 1 3-16 inches. The piston, which is of cast iron, is 1⅜ inches in diameter, with a groove on the edge, in which twine was used for packing. The piston rod plays on *friction rollers*.

Respectfully submitted,

G. A. CURTICE.
EDWARD W. HOWE.

*The tradition and belief among those who possess, and have possessed, this Model, is that it is the original one exhibited to Fulton and Livingston. The model might have been exhibited to Livingston before his departure for France in 1801. But it is manifest that it could not have been shown to Fulton, after the boat was built in 1792-3, till after his return from France, in 1806. If Fulton and Livingston visited Morey at Orford, it must have been between this latter date, and August, 1807, when the Clermont was launched. What knowledge of Morey's invention Livingston carried to France with him, and what influence, if any, it had on Fulton's experiments there, will probably never be known. S. K.

†Dr. Hosford, in a letter to the society, dated Dec. 3, expresses himself as believing that the original boat was "worked up into firewood," and that the traditions concerning the original, have clustered around and centered in a boat built by Morey, which *was* sunk in Fairlee Pond about fifty years ago. Dr. Hosford was Capt. Samuel Morey's medical adviser, and socially intimate with him from 1830 to the time of his death, in 1843, and says that Capt. Morey never alluded to the boat in his conversations with him.

THAT a boat was sunk in Fairlee Pond about 1820, or 1825, all seem to be agreed. That it was not the original boat seems to be conceded with equal unanimity. That it had an Engine in it when sunk, seems probable. The only point of interest, therefore, centering in the sunken boat, is, *Was the Engine the same that was used to propel the original boat?*

WHO can tell? If the original Engine constructed by Capt. Morey is there, the Society would use great exertions to recover it; believing the machinery, much of which is said to have been of copper, would not be so destroyed as to preclude the identification of its parts. But if it is a subsequent affair, much of the stimulus to exertion would be wanting. Whoever has any information on this subject, or concerning Capt. Morey and his inventions, is requested to communicate it to SILAS KETCHUM,

Corresponding Secretary,
BRISTOL, N. H.

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